EXHIBIT Z







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THE COLLECTED JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR, VOLUME THREE

A TWO MORROWS PUBLISHING PRODUCTION IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE KIRBY ESTATE FOITED BY JOHN MORROW DESIGN & LAYOUT BY JOHN & PAMELA MORROW PROOFREADING BY RICHARD HOWELL COVER COLOR BY TOM ZIUKO CONTRIBUTORS JIM AMASH D. BRUCE BERRY STEVE BISSETTE DAVID HAMILTON RICHARD KOLKMAN BRIAN PEARCE STEVE ROBERTSON STEVE RUDE MIKE THIBODEAUX SPECIAL THANKS TO: MARK EVANIER RANDY HOPPE RICHARD HOWELL ROBERT KATZ MARTY LASICK MARK PACELLA MIKE THIBODEAUX TOM ZIUKO THE CONTRIBUTORS FROM TJKC #13-15 — & OF COURSE THE KIRBY ESTATE FOR THEIR CONTINUANG SUPPORT OF OUR EFFORTS

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THE MONSTER OF MORAGGIA

Examining Marvel's revisions to Jack's story for Chamber of Darkness #4, by Jon B. Cooke

(Editor's Note: I suggest you read the penciled story on the following pages BEFORE you read this article, to keep from spoiling Jack's surprise ending!)

n what set out to be a standard article — a sidebar, really — on Jack Kirby's pair of stories for *Chamber of Darkness* #4 and #5, an interesting mystery unravelled. During an interview that mostly concerned *Spirit World*, I asked Mark Evanier, longtime Kirby associate, what he knew about those tales. Here the article really begins.

Evanier told a story (one he will elaborate on in his forthcoming biography of the King) that related one of several events that might have led Jack to quit Marvel Comics in 1970. When Evanier and Steve Sherman visited Jack in Irvine, California during the summer of '69, Jack told his guests that "he wrote a story that he was in love with," Evanier said, "that Roz thought was the best story that he had ever done, and he sent this thing off, and he was very proud of it. He got back a call from some editorial assistant, whose name to this day is unknown, that was very rude, telling him how he felt he should rewrite his story. 'We don't like it this way... change this, change this...' and Jack took the eraser and just destroyed this story he loved, and turned it into the version that they wanted."

That version was "The Monster," a seven-page horror short from Chamber Of Darkness #4, April, 1970. As printed, it is an unremarkable tale of ugly, misunderstood Andreas Flec (the "Monster"), an arrogant Eastern European nobleman, whose mysterious ways and contemptuous treatment of neighboring villagers provoke the lethal wrath of the townsfolk seeking justice for a perceived abomination.

Kirby historian Greg Theakston was contacted in hopes of tracking down photocopies of the unaltered story, and while they couldn't be found, he remembered seeing copies in the '70s. "This was one of the best horror jobs I had ever seen him do," Theakston said, "and yet completely corrupted in print." In comparing photocopies to the published version, Theakston opined, "It seems remarkable to me that [Marvel] put so much effort into changing what amounted to a perfectly fine story — there's no reason why it couldn't have run as it was." He suggested contacting Marie Severin who worked in the production department at Marvel during the affair, and was cover artist for COD #4.

A serendipitous chain of events then took rapid succession: Severin discovered original photocopies, along with her cover designs, and very kindly shared them with *TJKC*, adding pragmatically that "I was and am in awe of Jack Kirby, but even he was subject to changes and re-writes." It was then discovered that Mike Thibodeaux was in possession of four

pages from the published story and he graciously loaned the originals to *TJKC* for examination. The differences in the stories were devastating. The sheer inventiveness was diluted out of Jack's original, its grandiose action reduced to parlor room gunplay, and the finale seemed half-hearted. There was evidence of major revisions, and the final boards showed it. Entire pages were discarded, panels cut and rearranged, and remnants of original pencils could be detected under redrawn panels.

Jack's original submission confirms that Stan Lee was intended to dialogue the story, hopefully with "a touch of less standard pontifical oration" as Jack's margin note requests. (Jack apparently plotted the initial story since he had to explain to Stan that they were the witches). After being rejected, Jack got the art back and made changes, erasing most panels and rearranging others, even cutting up his art boards. Stan apparently was responsible for the replotting, since the final art's original — but pasted over — credit box lists Stan Lee as "plotter." But curiously, Jack did do the dialogue on this version, as proven by his handwriting in the balloons, and his erasing the original margin notes.

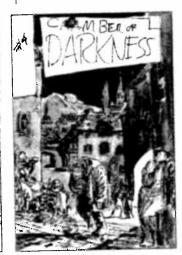
But the meddling didn't end there; someone at Marvel redrew the faces of the Monster and the mannequin. The revised pencils were then inked by John Verpoorten, and lettered with Jack's dialogue. This begs the question: Why were the faces redrawn? According to one of Severin's initial (but rejected) cover designs, the Monster's face is shown as Jack's "Hunchy" version but depicts a scene from the Lee-plotted story of the character walking through the village. (Could the face change have come about in fear of a Comics Code Authority rejection—or was the Monster's face too similar to another Marvel hunchback character, the CCA-approved villain from the Fantastic Four Annuals, Quasimodo?)

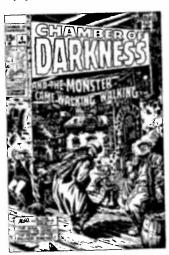
With the final revision, someone changed Jack's already-lettered dialogue in places, and whited out details on the Monster's face. Changes are not rare in the comics industry. (Severin mentioned one X-Men cover that was recolored five times.) But what ultimately concerns us, as Evanier said, is that Marvel transformed "a story that Jack was very proud of... into something he thought was lousy." Subjectively, many might agree that Jack's original was better and this chain of events may indicate more about a strained relationship between collaborators, rather than a substandard comics story.

Our investigation, as gratifying as it is to uncover past mysteries of Jack's career, was not without poignancy. In the original's final panel, the narrating "witches" (reminiscent of the EC horror comics (continued on page 28)

Here are Marie Severin's two attempts at a Chamber of Darkness #4 cover layout based on Jack's story, and her final cover inked by Bill Everett. Marie comments, "There are many stories that have been redrawn, replotted, etc. We made time for these things and Stan was the boss, and he must have been doing something right. So many people have no idea how much there is to produce a comic, and it was possible then for the editor (in this case Stan) to control his product from plot to coloringand he also was and is a pro."









The STRANCE FIGURED STAR THE FIRST TAIN.

(Editor's Note: I obscured Jack's bottom margin notes on this page, so they wouldn't spoil the surprise ending. The notes are shown on page 28.)

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